

English sequence proposal gets mixed reaction

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Early reaction from English Department faculty concerning a proposal to restructure the sequence of required English courses appears to be favorable, although many teachers said they had not yet reviewed the document.

"The general proposal sounds very good to me," said Maurine McElroy, associate professor of English and English Department undergraduate advisor. "I've heard enthusiastic comments."

Evan Carton, associate professor of English, said the proposal probably will be well-received by the faculty. "I think that, on the whole, the English Department faculty will be in support of the proposal."

The proposal was distributed to faculty members Friday, but many

department members said they had not studied the proposal enough to form a firm opinion.

The proposal will be discussed in a department meeting Wednesday, and faculty members will participate in a mail ballot with a voting deadline of Sept. 18.

Under the proposal, drafted by the E 346K Committee during the summer, a freshman rhetoric and composition course would remain a requirement of the nine-hour English sequence, but would not be offered during the regular session.

The proposal says students must satisfy the E 306 requirement by transfer, examination, a summer course taught at the University or a course through UT extension.

McElroy said she enjoys teaching E 306, but, "It seems to me we can do something better with our time and with our students' time."

Carton agreed, and said the majority of students will benefit from the broader courses they will be able to teach if the proposal is adopted.

"It (E 306) is a remedial course," he said. "It bears a great resemblance to eighth-grade English."

Carton said students already should be well acquainted with proper grammar and usage when they enter college. "It's the equivalent of asking the math department to teach addition, subtraction and multiplication."

Three new lower-division courses would be created under the proposal, including E 311, Topics in Writing; E 313, The Writing Process; and E 315, Thinking and Writing.

McElroy said the proposal would allow students to enter the University and focus on more advanced level courses rather than E 306.

"I think the writing program is

going to be stronger," McElroy said. "I don't think anyone is shirking responsibility."

Richard Leclercq, associate professor of English, said he has mixed feelings about the proposal.

"One strong point is that rhetoric programs are getting scrutinized," Leclercq said. "I think that's good."

Leclercq said although the new composition courses are vague, they could strengthen the department's rhetoric program. "I'd like to teach them," Leclercq said. "Just the effort to come up with three new courses is good."

But Leclercq said he disagrees with the section of the proposal removing the course from the English Department during the fall and spring semesters.

"I would hope they would teach it all year round," Leclercq said. He said if the course is required, it

"should be taught by the English Department."

Leclercq also said the renewal of E 346K should include a component for natural science majors.

Last year the department replaced a technical writing class and an expository writing class with E 346K, a composition course geared toward specific areas of interest. The department offered three versions of the course, including sciences and technologies, social and behavioral sciences, and arts and humanities.

E 346K, which has been postponed for a year while the committee reviews the University's writing program, would be offered under the new proposal, but will not have a science and technologies component.